

The Baptist Record

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'SHABBAT SHALOM' — Like countless Jews in Israel, this Messianic family wishes each other "the peace of the Sabbath" in traditional Jewish fashion. Esther and Ya'acov Choresch and their daughter, Odeliya, light candles, break bread and

read a Jewish Sabbath service. "I see myself as a Jew," Choresch comments, "a Jew who believes in Jesus." (BP) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

Jewish believers weather multitude of challenges

By Art Toalston

JERUSALEM (BP) — Messianic Jews are battling for their Jewishness.

No longer are they truly Jewish, their critics claim. The issue is their belief in Jesus, or Yeshua (ye-SHU-uh), as they call him in Hebrew.

"Any rabbi will tell you there is no room within traditional Judaism for any such belief," says Pinhas Peli, a Jerusalem Post columnist and professor of Jewish thought and literature at Ben Gurion University in Be'er Sheva.

"Claiming to be both a Jew and a Messianic believer is a contradiction in terms and an aberration of Judaism. Once you leave the Jewish religion or add to it something which is not genuine, you stop being a Jew."

But this small minority — about 3,000 in a nation of 4.4 million people — is intent on "remaining Jewish in a meaningful sense," says Baruch Maoz, leader of a Messianic congregation in the Tel Aviv area. And they are unwavering in their conviction that Jewish Scriptures, in Maoz's words, "find fulfillment nowhere else but in Christ as described in the New Testament."

"We live our lives as Jews in every sense, except those that deny Christ," Maoz says. He and his family observe Passover, for example, because "it's part of our history. I'm glad that my forefathers left Egypt. God brought them out, and that is something to celebrate."

Jewish believers "cannot, in the

end, turn to the rabbis to find the ultimate definition of being Jewish," says Avner Boskey, one of the leaders of a Jerusalem congregation. "Rather, we need to turn to Yeshua the Messiah to do that. The leaven of the Pharisees that Yeshua talked about is the same leaven which refused to accept his divinity and Messiahship, and these people ended up writing the Talmud," ancient writings interpreting the Jewish Bible.

Theology fails to impress at least a dozen organizations devoted to assailing Messianic Jews. Several leaders in the best-known group, Yad L'Achim, refused to be interviewed for this story. Believers say Yad L'Achim periodically harasses congregational leaders by gathering information about them, often meshing it with falsehoods, and disseminating the mishmash in neighborhoods and to municipal and national officials.

A poster with a photo of one Messianic couple and their toddler son warned: "Watch out for these people. They love you because they want you to love Jesus." Yad L'Achim's tactics also include demonstrations. And some believers claim the group bugs telephones, opens mail and breaks into homes.

Antagonists often label Messianics as missionaries, which in Israel is "only slightly more positive than being called a child molester," one believer says. The term has been twisted to mean "a soul robber," one seeking to "steal Jews away from their heritage"

or "make Jews into Gentiles," believers say.

Messianic Jews face an even more intense challenge from ultra-Orthodox or Hasidic Jews, also known as blacks because of the black hats and coats the men wear. They comprise only five to seven percent of the population, yet wield a disproportionate amount of clout because they are wooed by Israel's two major political parties.

Ultra-Orthodox Jews hurled stones into a Tiberias congregation's worship services during a six-month period in 1985. On several occasions, believers have been roughed up. Newspapers, fearing Hasidic protests, will not accept Messianic advertisements, a congregational leader says.

And Ultra-Orthodox Jews often pressure local officials to use zoning regulations against Messianic congregations.

Messianic Jews are not open-minded when it comes to pleas to refrain from evangelizing. "We do not have the right to compromise on... the Great Commission which the Jewish Messiah gave to us in Matthew 28," Boskey says.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 1 said the gospel should go "to the Jew first," he says. And the Apostle Peter in Acts 4 told Jews "there is no other name under heaven" for salvation. To fail to take the gospel to the Jews would be the "Great Omission," Boskey says.

Art Toalston writes for the Foreign Mission Board.



NO LESS A JEW — To most Orthodox Jews, belief in Jesus is incompatible with their heritage. But it isn't to Baruch Maoz, leader of Grace and Truth Assembly near Tel Aviv, and some 3,000 other Messianic Jews in Israel. "What does it mean to be a part of any nation?" Maoz asks. "You identify with its past, with its present and with its future." (BP) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1988

Sponsored by the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

What next, Southern Baptists?

The recent televised interviews by newsman Bill Moyers of such Southern Baptist personalities as Paul Pressler, W. A. Criswell, and Daniel Vestal leaves one wondering just what was indeed the real reason for the Southern Baptist takeover operation that came to the surface at the Houston convention in 1979.

Pressler is the Houston appeals court judge who was declared to be the architect of the beginning of the takeover in 1979 and who many have felt has been calling the signals since.

Criswell is pastor of First Church, Dallas.

Vestal is pastor of First Church, Midland. He is a decidedly conservative pastor who is a member of the SBC Peace Committee. Though conservative, he continues to speak out in opposition to the activities of the Pressler operation.

Moyers was ordained as a Southern Baptist preacher. He grew up in Marshall, Texas, and is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. He got into news work by becoming the press secretary for President Lyndon B. Johnson and has been involved in it since that time. His home church is Central Baptist Church, Marshall.

The Moyers interview of the personalities mentioned continues to be significant due to the continuation of efforts to change the nature of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs if, indeed, not to do away with it altogether, and the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission. Southern Baptists, of course, have no direct input into the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs except through the SBC Public Affairs Committee, which is the Southern Baptist presence on the Baptist Joint Committee.

And that brings two more personalities into play. Sam Currin of North Carolina is chairman of the Public Affairs Committee. He is a judge in that state and was recommended for such a position by Jesse Helms, also a Southern Baptist and a decidedly conservative voice in the United States Senate. Currin was nominated for appointment to a federal judgeship by President Ronald Reagan upon recommendation by Helms but was not affirmed. His appointment to his present position came at the hands of the North Carolina governor.

A word of explanation is in order at this point. The Baptist Record has discontinued the use of the term "fundamentalist" at the request of the more conservative group in the convention; but we have continued the use of the term "moderate," though that group does not like that designation either. Pressler, however, continues to use the term "liberal" in referring to the moderates; so there seems to be little need to try to avoid using "fundamentalist" if the term is needed for designations.

Both groups are conservative. In spite of Pressler's continued use of "liberal," the number of liberals among Southern Baptists is so infinitesimal in number as to be completely negligible.

The struggle is not between conservatives and liberals but between two groups of conservatives with varying ideologies.

The second personality to be added to the discussion is a man named Les Csorba of Virginia. He is engaged to be married to Pressler's daughter. And he is a member of the SBC Public Affairs Committee. Csorba is the editor of a publication called *Accuracy in Academia*. The intent is to monitor the lectures of professors in state universities.

The term "fundamentalist" does not really describe the group of people who are under discussion at this point. Fundamentalism has nothing to do with their effort. There are people who would call themselves fundamentalists who would not agree with the group on the points to be mentioned.

We will call the group ultra conservatives. They have been upset with the officials of the Baptist Joint Committee because of their inability to cause that nine-convention representative body to go before the U.S. Congress in support of anti-abortion legislation and in support of organized prayer in public schools.

The Baptist Joint Committee, however, by its statement of operation, deals only in matters of church and state, or religious liberty; and abortion falls instead into a moral category. Surely the staff members of the Baptist Joint Committee oppose abortion, but they are not free to speak officially in opposition to it.

Prayer in public schools is another matter. The fact is that such prayer would be contrary to the First Amendment to the constitution, for it would be in direct contradiction to the separation of church and state.

While prayer in public schools sounds fine to conservative Protestants living in conservative Protestant areas, it would not be as acceptable in Utah, where Mormons form the dominant group. Conservative Protestants would not be willing to accept their concepts of prayer in every case.

If in Mississippi a Mormon child were to attend public school and there were a prayer time in that school, the Mormon child would have to be asked to pray on occasion, or the school would be guilty of discrimination, an attitude the courts would not and should not tolerate in the public school.

In 1986 in Atlanta there was a motion to discontinue SBC funding for the Baptist Joint Committee. Instead, by a close vote, the convention referred the matter to the SBC Executive Committee. That committee appointed a fact-finding committee which included James Yates, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City. The fact-finding committee's recommendation was to continue to work through the Baptist Joint Committee. Pressler was a member of the fact-finding committee and supported its recommendation though he had been critical of the Baptist Joint Committee. The recommendation passed at the convention in St. Louis in 1987. Its passing, however, changed the make up of the Public Affairs Committee, making it possible to have an ultra conservative majority immediately.

Even though the convention voted to continue to work through the Baptist Joint Committee, shortly after the convention members of the Public Affairs Committee began to search for ways to change that. Csorba made the motion and the committee voted in a split decision to ask that the SBC Executive Committee channel SBC funds earmarked for the Baptist Joint Committee through the Public Affairs Committee. That issue may come up at the Executive Committee's meeting next week.

Later three officers at the SBC Christian Life Commission and four members of the Public Affairs Committee got together without any official notice to discuss the merger of the two bodies. The Christian Life Commission is an agency with commissioners who can make decisions, though this one would take convention action. The Public Affairs Committee is a standing committee of the convention and has no decision making power.

In the televised interview, Moyers asked Pressler about his membership in an organization called the National Council on Policy. The intent of this council is to create a conservative influence on political thinking in the United States. Pressler confirmed membership but refused to answer the question and terminated the interview.

The National Council on Policy is funded in part by the Coors Brewery in Colorado. This company is involved in conservative politics. On Aug. 28 of last year at a ranch near Dallas, Joseph Coors, Mr. and Mrs. Pressler, and Paige Patterson joined others in

The gambling ship

By Nathan L. Barber

Gambling, in one form or another, is an issue which has surfaced regularly in our state for a number of years now. Proponents of legalized gambling in our state generally attempt to tie it to very worthy causes to convince legislators to support it.

An example of this tactic has been the attempt in the past to promote legalized gambling as the long sought after answer for better education and increased teachers' salaries. The "answer for a worthy cause" tactic is again being utilized here on the Gulf Coast by proponents of legalized gambling.

Tourism is the worthy cause this time around, and a casino boat is being touted as the answer. (Strangely enough, some of the officials who are suggesting a sagging tourism industry are the same ones pushing for another new hotel. It is a proposed multi-million dollar hotel to be built just a dice throw from the site of the docked floating casino!)

Many of us on the coast, and we hope many others throughout the state, are unwilling to believe that legalized gambling is the panacea which some officials would have us think. It is, however, a panacea for those who would have us believe that you really can get something of value for little or nothing. Let me propose, instead, that:

(1) Gambling is a painful symptom of our present materialistic approach to life.

(2) Gambling exploits the greed of man; greed is the primary motivation of gambling. Let it be further noted that gambling establishment owners are not in business for a public service but for personal profit.

(3) Gambling is in direct opposition to the biblical work ethic.

(4) Gambling undermines the integrity of honest and hardworking law enforcement officers.

(5) Gambling in a particular place, such as the Mississippi Sound, confuses our youth as to why it is right in one place and wrong in another.

(6) Gambling of one kind, petty or not, preconditions communities and states to gambling of all kinds, thus Pandora's Box is opened.

(7) Gambling legalized for a floating casino is only "the foot in the door." People in other areas of our state need to recognize that gambling in their own backyard is only one uncontested law away. I believe the courts will view gambling in one part of the state as discriminatory against another part of the state and judicially legalize it all over the state.

(8) Gambling is a regressive industry; it produces no new money for a community. Gambling redistributes wealth to a few at the expense of the community.

Those of us on the coast who oppose gambling need the help of people all over the state to combat this threat. It would be helpful to write or call state senators and representatives to inform them of opposition to legalized gambling in any form in any area of the state. They need to know that their votes on this issue, will be watched if it comes up for consideration. Many of our coast politicians already have been preconditioned toward gambling and will always vote for it. Only a few have stood against it.

This is going to affect every community in Mississippi as well as the Gulf Coast. Mississippi does not need gambling.

Nathan L. Barber is pastor of First Church, Bay St. Louis.

hosting a reception and dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Howard Phillips as a fund raiser for the Conservative Caucus Foundation. The dinner was \$1,000 per couple. Phillips is head of the conservative caucus.

Pressler has continued to maintain that he was pulled into this controversy because five students at Baylor University asked him to check out a religion text book. If the book was a problem it should have been removed, and it has been. It hardly seems likely that such an incident would have sparked the turmoil that we have had. Not only is the movement threatening the Baptist Joint Committee, but there are fears that the Christian Life Commission may be altered and Baptist Press, the denomination's news gathering agency decimated as well.

Pressler has not hidden his dissatisfaction with Baptist Press and has indicated he feels changes should be made. Any design for alteration at this point, however, surely is not

related to theology, for Baptist Press does not deal in theology. It simply reports the news. Yet Pressler continues to say that the controversy is over scripture.

Bring back together four of the personalities already mentioned. They are Paul Pressler; his future son-in-law, Les Csorba; Sam Currin, the North Carolina judge; and Jesse Helms, the ultra conservative U.S. senator. A common tie that binds them all together is interest in the Baptist Joint Committee.

And a fifth person is beginning to emerge. He is Richard Land, a close associate of Pressler's. Land has been hailed as the architect of the plan to merge the Christian Life Commission and the Public Affairs Committee. Land is a member of the SBC Public Affairs Committee.

Moyers' question was to ask for an explanation of what he called "the growing connection" between the religious right and the political right. There was no answer.

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Agencies join forces to staff prayer room

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP) — Creating a spirit of unity during the Southern Baptist Convention meeting June 14-16 in San Antonio, is the purpose behind five Southern Baptist agencies joining forces to staff a prayer room during the sessions.

Representatives from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union have all pledged to staff the prayer room at the Henry Gonzales Convention Center.

"We hope people respond to the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention by coming to pray," said Avery Willis, manager of the leader-

ship development section in the church training department at the Sunday School Board.

"The prayer room will be open whenever the convention center is open," Willis said. "Each agency will take so many hours each day, and will be responsible for having someone there during those times. We hope there will always be people there. We hope at times it will be overflowing," he added.

Willis said the groups have not planned an organized prayer agenda.

"We just want people to go there to pray," he said.

Terri Lackey writes for the Sunday School Board.

Drummond to be nominee to Southeastern Seminary

By Marv Knox

ST. LOUIS (BP) — Lewis A. Drummond has been recommended to be the next president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Drummond, 61, is the Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism and administrative director of the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Drummond was the unanimous choice of Southeastern's 12-member presidential search committee, which met Feb. 11-12 in St. Louis, announced Chairman Robert D. Crowley, pastor of Montrose Church in Rockville, Md., and chairman of the seminary trustee board.

The search committee interviewed three "very, very serious candidates" for the presidency during the St. Louis meeting, Crowley said. In addition to Drummond, they were Charles L. Chaney, assistant to the chancellor and dean of the Courts Redford School of Theology and Church Vocations at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas.

"After the interviews of all three, the committee discussed all three very carefully, had a period of prayer and conducted an open vote," Crowley

reported. "Dr. Drummond was the unanimous choice."

Crowley told Baptist Press, "The search committee wanted to move to a spirit of peace and reconciliation, and the committee felt Dr. Drummond was the person to bring this spirit."

If Drummond is elected by the full board of trustees when they meet March 14-15, his tenure will be effective April 1, Crowley said, adding Drummond currently is on sabbatical and would be available immediately.

"We have asked Dr. Lolley to be there (at Southeastern) through the graduation ceremonies this spring," Crowley added.

Crowley noted Drummond is "a subscriber to the Baptist Faith and Message Statement and very conservative in his theology."

He is a graduate of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, and earned a doctor of philosophy degree from King's College of the University of London. He has done post-doctoral study at Oxford University in Oxford, England, and Spurgeon's College.

Marv Knox is BP feature editor.

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Annuity Board proposes new insurance programs

DALLAS (BP) — Annuity Board trustees unanimously voted in their Feb. 1-2 meeting to ask the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee for approval to develop new property and casualty insurance programs and new retirement plans.

If the proposals are approved, the Annuity Board expects to begin offering new insurance programs including church-owned property coverage, general liability, workers' compensation, bus liability, day-care liability, and minister's malpractice insurance.

Also, if approved, the proposals would allow the Annuity Board to offer retirement plans under "tax-qualified" plans rather than "not for profit" plans.

The insurance recommendation requires Southern Baptist Convention approval since it requires a change in

the board's program statement. The proposal is expected to be acted on during the SBC Executive Committee's Feb. 22-24 meeting in Nashville.

Darold H. Morgan, Annuity Board president, told trustees he does not anticipate any problem with amending the program statement since the SBC Executive Committee had requested the Annuity Board to study the program.

In the retirement plan proposal, the Annuity Board is seeking approval to charter subsidiary corporations which would offer "tax qualified" retirement plans to SBC institutions. The charter and bylaws currently permit the board to offer only 403(b) plans, which are specifically for not-for-profit organizations.

Baptist institutions such as hospitals and colleges sometimes prefer to use 401(a) and 401(k) tax-

qualified plans which are under ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act) guidelines. Passed in 1974, ERISA established minimum standards for company pension plans. The 403(b) plans such as the Church Annuity Plan and Convention Annuity Plan are free from ERISA provisions.

In his 1987 report Morgan told the trustees that expanded Church Annuity Plan adoptions topped the goal of 10,000 well before the end of the year and by the end of January adoptions stood at 13,736.

By adopting the expanded Plan, a church makes available to its ministers and staff members significant benefits such as matching retirement plan contributions from churches and state conventions, supplemental life and disability in-

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SBC membership reflects smallest gain since 1936

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist growth virtually ground to a halt in 1986-87 when denominational programs reported small changes and some convention-wide statistical areas had gains or totals smaller than have been seen in decades.

The denomination's missions organizations, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood, are the brightest spots, with increases of 1.4 and 0.7 percent, respectively, over the previous year's totals. The Southern Baptist Convention fiscal year runs

from Oct. 1 to the following Sept. 30; the new statistics reflect the year ending Sept. 30, 1987.

Church membership, which has shown annual increases since 1926, recorded a gain of 109,203, or 0.7 percent, to reach a new total of 14,727,770, as compared to the 1986 total of 14,618,567.

The increase in church membership, however, is the lowest number by which Southern Baptists have grown since 1936, when the denomination gained almost 93,000 new members.

The number of churches in the convention increased by 170, or 0.5 percent, to a new total of 37,286. Except for 1985-86's smaller increase because of the loss of 40 Southern Baptist-affiliated churches in Canada, the 1986-87 total was the smallest increase in nine years.

Baptisms in Southern Baptist churches, down by 6.8 percent, or 24,629, totaled 338,495. Except for the baptisms total of 336,050 in 1977-78, the new baptisms total is the lowest for

(Continued on page 4)

FMB assigns first missionary to deaf

By Anne W. McWilliams

The Foreign Mission Board, SBC, has approved Olinda (Lin) Wilson for service overseas and has assigned her to Trinidad to work with the deaf, in a two-year pilot project. Under the Board's Auxiliary personnel program, the Mississippi native will be Southern Baptists' first foreign missionary to the deaf.

Miss Wilson, 33, born in Hattiesburg, oldest of seven children, grew up in Columbia, where her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Wilson, are members of Calvary Baptist Church. She received a bachelor's degree in music therapy from William Carey

College and a master's degree in psychology from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. On Dec. 18, 1987, she received a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary.

Her work permit from the government of Trinidad has arrived and she expects to leave Feb. 29 for Port of Spain, the capital city where she will live. Her work on the English-speaking Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Tobago will include training church leaders to organize deaf ministries, teaching sign-language classes, and initiating other projects to assist the deaf, such as

teaching illiterate deaf to read.

Lyndon Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., where she has for four years been coordinator of ministries with its 40-member deaf congregation, commissioned her as a missionary on Jan. 17. The deaf members of the church sponsored a reception for her.

Her first interest in working with the deaf, she recalls, came when she was at Camp Garaywa and Jerry St. John, then worker with the deaf in Mississippi, taught campers songs in sign language. Her first contact with non-hearing persons came when she visited the Mississippi School for the

Deaf during her college years. One summer she worked with mentally ill deaf in Indianapolis.

During 1983-1984 while music therapist at Hudspeth Center in Jackson, she was a member of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson. At age 12 she had felt God was calling her to missions, but then, she says, she dismissed that for a while. At Broadmoor, she heard a sermon by James Hurt which was addressed to people who tried to run from God. She acknowledged that was what she had been doing, and surrendered to mis-

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Olinda "Lin" Wilson

SBC membership reflects smallest gain since 1936

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the convention since 1949. The all-time high for baptisms in the SBC was 445,725 in 1972.

The 1985-86 baptism total registered an increase over the previous total, but it had been preceded by three consecutive decreases. More than 7,000 churches did not report a baptism on their Uniform Church Letter survey forms for the 1986-87 church year.

The denomination's church music enrollment reflected the 22nd consecutive increase, with a gain of 0.8 percent, or 14,202, to a new total of 1,738,294. It followed an increase of 2.8 percent, or more than 46,000 participants.

The enrollment increase for Woman's Missionary Union of 1.4 percent, or 16,512, is the second consecutive increase, bringing that program's ongoing enrollment to 1,197,479. WMU enrollment has gone up more than 30,000 in the last two years.

Brotherhood, with an increase of 3,783, or 0.7 percent, reached a new total of 572,987. This increase follows an 0.8 percent loss.

Sunday School, the denomination's largest program, registered a change of 0.0 percent, with a small actual loss in ongoing enrollment of 1,867, bringing the total enrollment to 7,942,106. It marks the second consecutive loss for

the denomination's Bible study program, after posting annual gains from 1980 through 1985.

Enrollment in Church Training also registered a change of 0.0 percent, because of a small actual loss of 408, bringing the total enrollment to 1,953,937. This follows three years of small declines, which were preceded by four consecutive increases.

According to Martin Bradley, director of the research services department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board: "Reporting procedures used by one state convention for church training resulted in inflated figures for 1986. Had this not occurred, the change for church training enrollment in the SBC in 1987 would likely have been positive."

Total receipts in Southern Baptist churches increased by 4.3 percent, or \$176,109,005, to a new total of \$4,293,683,245. The increase in total dollars given in Southern Baptist churches is 1.7 percentage points less than the previous year's gain of 6.0 percent.

Mission expenditures, which are included as part of total receipts, went up by 4.3 percent, or \$27,313,943, to a new high of \$662,691,289. The increase is almost one-half of a percentage point more than the previous gain of 4.0 percent.

Information included in the annual

statistical report for the denomination is provided by the research services department of the Sunday School Board from data collected on Uniform Church Letters submitted by 36,674 churches.

Jim Lowry writes for the Sunday School Board.

Big January reverses trend

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists contributed a record \$15.5 million to their national Cooperative Program budget in January.

The big January total reversed a two-month downward trend in the Cooperative Program and brought the budget back ahead of the pace for the same period last year.

The \$15,514,367 January receipts topped the previous monthly total — about \$13.1 million in January 1987 — by 18.63 percent. It brought total receipts for the 1987-88 fiscal year to \$45,630,004, or 3.55 percent ahead of the total for the first four months of last year's budget.

FMB assigns first missionary to deaf

(Continued from page 3)
sions service. At Broadmoor, too, she began working with the church's deaf young people, at the encouragement of another church member, Mignonne Tadlock.

She entered Southern Seminary, feeling strongly that God was calling her to work with deaf people overseas, but the Foreign Mission Board had no such previous work, though the Home Mission Board did.

Louis Cobb, consultant, Foreign Mission Board, "advised me to hang in there and by the time I finished seminary a request from the field might come through," she remembers. In December, the month she was graduating from the seminary, she got a call from the Foreign Mission Board offering her the two-year assignment in Trinidad.

She has had no formal training in sign language, but has learned it through her years of contact with the deaf. She credits the deaf congregation of Lyndon Church with refining her skills. Vernon Gordon, a fellow Mississippian, now a student at Boyce Bible School and member of that deaf congregation, she said played a significant part in that training.

"When I am with the deaf," she said,

"I am the student and they are the teachers. People who are hearing impaired are an entirely different culture. You have to be compassionate, and willing to try to communicate, and willing to be laughed at when you make mistakes with the sign language. The deaf at Lyndon were patient with me. They took me in."

Once, on a mission trip to Honduras, she prayed that God would confirm her call to a foreign field by showing her the need for a deaf ministry in Honduras. While she was working in a clinic, weighing people and checking blood pressure, a little deaf girl appeared in the line, with her mother. "Her eyes showed her intelligence. Yet she could not communicate. I wanted to sit down right then and teach her sign language and tell her of God's love for her." This child, she felt, was God's way of answering her prayer.

In Trinidad, there are at least 4,000 deaf persons. The island reports 264 deaf persons waiting to be admitted into the three schools for the deaf. Though the schools there sign in exact English, Miss Wilson says most deaf don't like it. Instead she will use American sign language.

When two years are up, she has an option to stay for a third year. By then, perhaps there will be a request for a career missionary to the deaf.

Whatever place God has for her then, Lin Wilson will be ready to go there, ready to relay the message of God's love to those who do not know because they cannot hear.

Says her friend, Mignonne Tadlock, "The Southern Baptist Conference for the Deaf has been working and praying with the Foreign Mission Board for several years. Their goal has been to provide a Southern Baptist witness for Christ to deaf people in countries where we have mission work. Deaf people throughout our convention have been praying for open doors to deaf ministry in other countries. Pray for Lin Wilson, pioneer in deaf missions in Trinidad. Pray that doors will open in other countries for deaf people to go as missionaries."



Alan Celoria and family

Evangelism Conference



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Parkway Choir, Jackson, directed by Lew King.



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FMB lends flood relief in Brazil

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — About 600 families who were left homeless by a flood in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro state will receive food and supplies from Southern Baptist missionaries.

The Foreign Mission Board sent about \$60,000 in hunger and general relief funds Feb. 8 to missionary Gregory Deering, who is coordinating relief efforts, said Bill Damon, associate area director for Brazil. With the \$60,000, missionaries will buy and distribute a one-month supply of food, as well as blankets, mattresses, cleaning supplies, and health kits to ward off diseases.

They also will be looking for ways to comfort the people and present the gospel of Christ.

Five days of heavy rains in early February caused floods and mud slides that killed at least 85, injured 200 and left 4,800 homeless, according to wire reports. Forty buildings collapsed in Petropolis, a mountain resort north of Rio de Janeiro city.

Committee addresses new Baptist hymnal

NASHVILLE (BP) — The three-year process to develop a new "Baptist Hymnal" began at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board Feb. 4-5. Subcommittee members considered page format and hymn score style to be recommended to the full hymnal committee in September.

Concerns and requests expressed in letters from Southern Baptist church leaders and laypeople were reviewed as a part of the process to deal with indices, paper, binding, and organization of materials.

Until the full committee meets, the design/organization subcommittee members will do independent study on topical index headings.

Although it was the first subcommittee to meet, other subcommittees already are at work.

Florida evangelists set up ethics panel

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — Evangelists in Florida have established a council of accountability to handle complaints about unethical conduct in their ranks.

The council is believed to be the first ethics panel for evangelists in the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Conference of Florida Baptist Evangelists, composed of 33 of the estimated 62 full-time Baptist evangelists in the state, voted unanimously to set up the council during the organization's annual meeting Jan. 11 in Orlando. A committee will meet Feb. 25 in Jacksonville to develop principles and guidelines.

"This will not be a regulatory body," said Jerry Drace of Jacksonville, president of the conference. "The most we could do is censure another evangelist. And we hope we never

have to do this."

Drace said the council will consider several matters affecting the integrity of evangelists, including financial openness and family life. The group will handle complaints from churches concerning evangelists and evangelists' complaints against churches, he said.

Stanley is named to Hall of Fame

WASHINGTON (BP) — Former Southern Baptist Convention President Charles F. Stanley was inducted into the National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame during the organization's annual meeting in February.

The 55-year-old pastor of the 11,000-member First Baptist Church of Atlanta joins earlier honorees Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Charles E. Fuller and Walter A. Maier as recipients of NRB's highest honor.

Presentation of the award was made by NRB Executive Director Ben Armstrong, who said it is presented annually "to the individual whose ministry represents the highest standards of integrity and service in communicating the gospel."

Stanley's extensive radio and television outreach, known as In Touch Ministries, includes daily radio broadcasts and weekly telecasts. His "In Touch" programs are heard on 450 radio stations, while the weekly telecast of the Sunday morning worship service of First Church, Atlanta, is seen on more than 125 television stations. The telecast also is beamed worldwide through the Armed Forces Radio and Television Network to all U.S. military bases abroad, U.S. embassies around the world and American ships at sea.

Additionally, in the United States, the weekly service is picked up by six cable satellite networks, making it available to thousands of communities across the country.

Congress kills money for Jews

WASHINGTON (BP) — Congress has rescinded an \$8 million appropriation for construction of schools for North African Jews in France.

The action came at the request of the project's sponsor, Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii, who said he had made an "error in judgment" in backing the appropriation.

The \$8 million appropriation, part of last year's \$600 billion omnibus spending bill, would have gone to a New York-based organization, Ozar-Hatora, to help build schools for North African Jews living in France. Although the original earmark classified the 400,000 North African Sephardic Jews living in France as refugees, the U.S. and French governments and the United Nations do not recognize the group as refugees.

One aspect of the appropriation that attracted fire was its alleged violation of church-state separation.

Southern Baptists to focus on biblical interpretation

By David R. Wilkinson

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — After a decade of controversy that often has focused on what the Bible is, Southern Baptists will gather in North Carolina in April to discuss what the Bible says.

The Conference on Biblical Interpretation, to be held April 25-27 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, is the second of three national conferences convened by the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention's six seminaries. Last year's Conference on Biblical Inerrancy, also held at Ridgecrest, attracted

a capacity crowd of more than 1,000 participants.

The conferences were proposed by the seminary presidents in their 1986 "Glorieta Statement" to the SBC Peace Committee as one means to help resolve the denomination's ongoing political and theological controversy.

As with the 1987 conference, the seminary presidents have gone outside the denomination to invite as major speakers scholars from the nation's conservative evangelical

community.

J.I. Packer, professor of historical and systematic theology at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada, will deliver three addresses. Packer, a keynote speaker at last year's conference, will deal with issues of biblical interpretation in three areas — creation, women in ministry and eschatology.

Two of his addresses will be followed by responses from two Southern Baptist leaders representing differing (Continued on page 9)

Annuity Board proposes changes

(Continued from page 3)

surance and survivor protection.

"Our efforts to convince churches that the \$33.34 per month plan is inadequate has succeeded. More than 75 percent of the applications in the expanded Church Annuity Plan are significant upgrades in pension premiums," said Morgan.

Despite the stock market collapse in October 1987, Treasurer Harold Richardson reported that all Annuity Board funds ended the year with positive performance. Investment income totaled \$112 million.

The Fixed Fund was credited with 9.5 percent in 1987 and will be credited 8.8 percent in 1988. The Balanced Fund earned 3.25 percent, while the Short-Term Fund earned 6.64 percent. The Variable Fund unit value was up two cents to \$6.28 per unit.

The year saw assets rise above \$2 billion for the first time, and \$55.8 million in retirement and relief benefits were paid.

Contributions to member accounts rose from \$125.6 million in 1986 to \$132.2 million last year.

Trustees elected a new chairman and vice chairman. B.J. Martin of Houston was elected chairman of the board, succeeding W. Gordon Hobgood Jr., who resigned to accept election as executive vice president/chief operating officer. Martin, who was trustee vice chairman, presided over the meeting.

He is vice president of church and denominational relations at Houston Baptist University.

Hobgood, 55, who was elected by the trustee executive and administrative policy committees in December, was managing director for the trust line of business at First Republic Bank Corporation in Dallas. He had been a trustee of the Annuity Board two years.

Trustees also approved a number of personnel and organizational changes.

Senior vice president Doyle Maricle was elected director of a new benefits/planning division. Maricle, a 30-year Annuity Board veteran, will direct strategic planning, research, and records management.

Richard Farr, who has been with the Annuity Board for 20 years, was promoted to senior vice president and director of a new Retirement Services Division.

Curtis D. Sharp and Harvey J. Wright, both regional directors in the marketing division, were promoted to vice president.

Trustees elected Terry Wade to the

executive staff as vice president-actuary. Wade, an enrolled actuary, is a Fellow of the Actuarial Society.

He will direct the actuarial services department and benefit services area.

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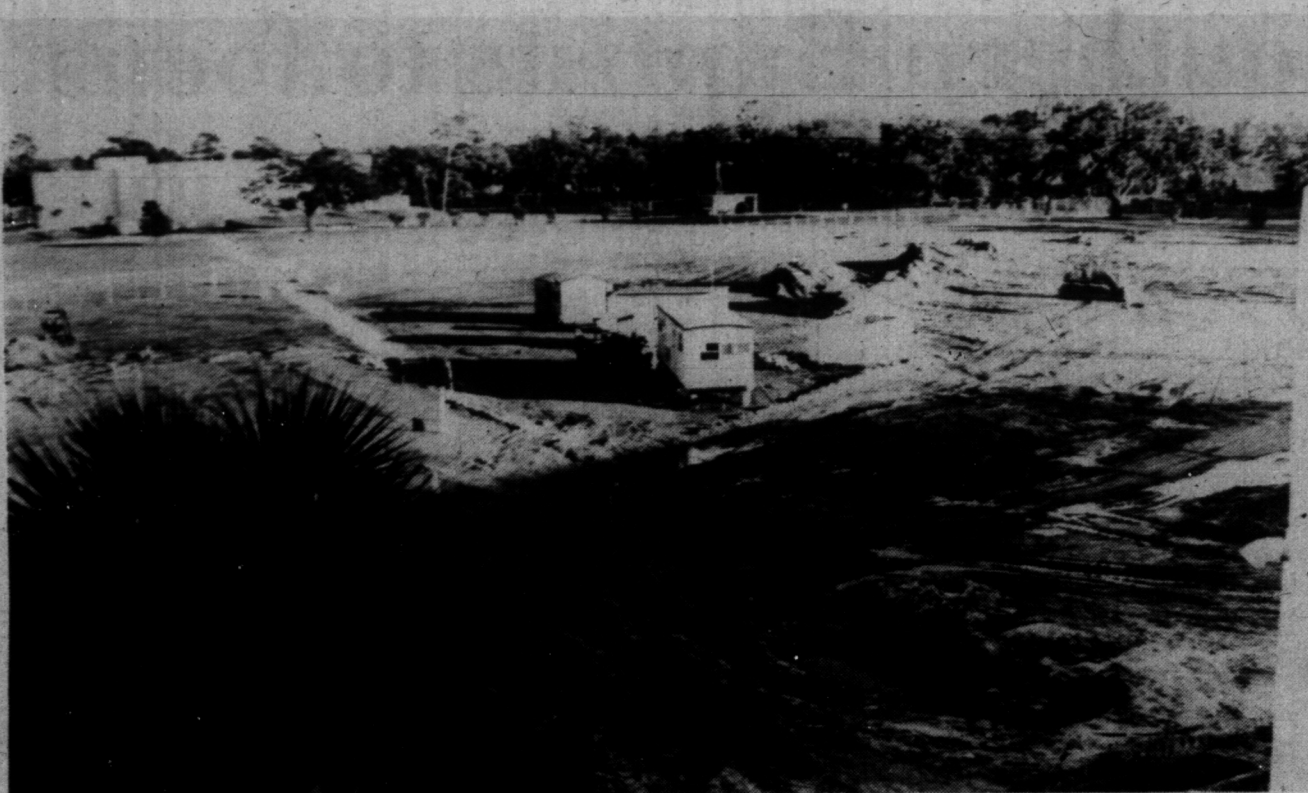
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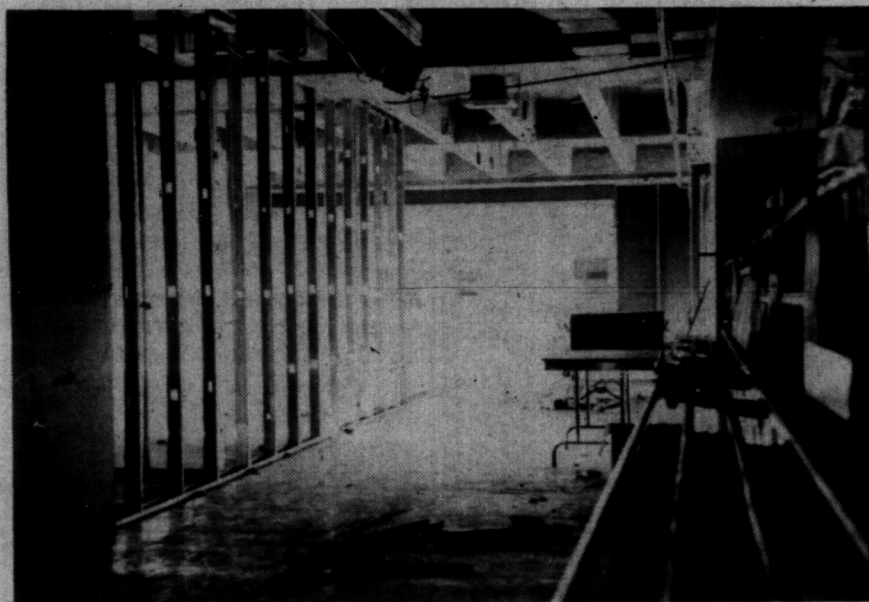
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Gulfshore gets facelift

The Gulfshore Baptist Assembly facelift is well underway. Mississippi Baptists' state assembly at Pass Christian is being dug out, moved around, and generally messed up in order to accommodate about half again the number of people it could handle at conferences in the past. The renovation should cause no problems for conference attendees in the near future. But for the moment, the cafeteria would be mighty breezy. Pictured are the cafeteria walls torn out, the ground floor registration area and lounge currently disappeared, and the mud on the front lawn that will shortly be another wing to the complex. (Photos by Tim Nicholas).



Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

Churches should tithe

Editor:

I will begin by saying that I was reared in a Landmark Baptist church; and, although the basic beliefs are the same, when I was in my early 20s I began to worship at a Southern Baptist church.

It did not take long for me to see that this was much better. For though I had always been taught the importance of missions, I could see that through the organizations of the Southern Baptist Convention so much more could be accomplished in carrying on the work of our Lord.

This brings me to the purpose of this letter. I believe in the priesthood of the believer, and I also believe that it is right to tithe to carry on the work of our Lord. If it is right for individuals to tithe, it is also right for the church to tithe a tithe of the tithe (Num. 18:25-32). Since this tithe of the tithe was to go to Aaron, the priest, and our only high priest is Jesus Christ, our Lord, then we would have to agree that the tithe of the churches would go to carry on his work other than the local church. It is given to the church by the priesthood of believers; and it is right for us to tithe to the Cooperative Program, our arm in reaching other areas of service to our Lord.

Someone told me that this meant for the preachers to tithe. I cannot accept this since verse 28 of Chapter 18 says of all your tithes; it means every single part of the tithe.

One of the things that has me convinced that the tithe is indeed the Lord's is that it is not to stop with the individual but to reach on out to the lost world through the churches being organized in the effort; because, without our being united together in this effort, we will fail. That is why Satan has stepped in and persuaded so many people that the Cooperative Program is not important and to get the churches to cut their gifts and/or tithe to the Cooperative Program.

I would like some input from others about this problem.

Name withheld
by request

Help for new Christian

Editor:

When one of our family has a need we all have an opportunity to share in home missions.

Alan Priest, an 11-year-old youngster in Franklin County, must have heart surgery again. He was born with a congenital heart defect plus other complex problems. This will be his third major operation in his short life.

Although covered by insurance at the time of the first two operations, there is no coverage now. The former insurance carrier is no longer in business, and the past medical history renders him uninsurable.

His mother and step father have ap-

plied for aid, but the paper work involved in government assistance gets bogged down sometimes.

The crippled children's association of Mississippi has helped Alan, and his family, since his birth; but they can only cover a small part of the medical cost involved in an operation of this type.

I know there are many needs to be met every day for each and every one of us. It is hard for us to know which are the most urgent. I ask that as a family we ask the Lord to guide us in the right direction.

Alan and his family need help today. Tomorrow there will be someone else whose needs must be met. We never know when it may be our family.

Alan is a very new Christian. He made a profession of faith Jan. 17 and was baptized Jan. 31. He knows the Lord is watching over him, and he isn't worried. This is our chance to show Alan what Christian love and caring mean.

A fund has been established by Rev. Martin Howard, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Rt. 1, Smithdale, Miss., Attention: Alan Priest Fund.

Becky Partridge
Meadville

Oppose gambling

Editor:

During the Feb. 10 business meeting at Woolmarket Church, the members present, representing the entire church membership, voted to oppose gambling in the state of Mississippi, unanimously.

Gambling has been shown to redistribute a citizen's income from the local merchant to the gambling industry. Gambling will not be the economic boon to the Gulf Coast that some people are trying to promote.

We urge all Christians to do all they can to oppose gambling in Mississippi. We have laws against it and we hope they will be upheld against the Eupora Star and any future efforts to legalize gambling.

Debra Boyd
Secretary

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Attention: WMU directors

The correct telephone number to order the home missions map shown on the back cover of April-May-June DIMENSION is 1-800-634-2462. The telephone number shown on the cover is not correct.

Computer users will gather

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Specialists from more than 85 computer hardware, and software, telecommunications and consulting companies will participate in this year's Southern Baptist Computer Users Association annual meeting March 22-23 in Dallas.

To register, send name, address, name of organization to: Jim Oliver, SBCUA Treasurer, 2326 Apollo Way, Mesquite, TX, 75150.

Faces And Places

by anne washburn mcwilliams

Canton (Quangzhou), China

At 8 o'clock on a Monday morning I left Hong Kong by Hoverferry. Three hours later we arrived in Canton (Guangzhou) on the Pearl River (which looks wider than the Pearl at Jackson). For one and a half days, I could get a swift peek at China before going back to Hong Kong by train.

Canton is called the "Goat City" because the people have kept alive the imaginary story that once the city bordered the sea, and its people lived by fishing. "One day," they say, "five celestials came to earth riding five goats, each goat holding a mouthful of rice-ears. They gave the rice to the people and taught them how to grow it. Then they returned to the sky and left the goats, which soon turned to stone." I saw the stone statue of the goats, but I doubt that's how it got there!

We registered at the enormous and luxurious Garden Hotel, which does have a garden at one side. And one wall in the lobby is covered in what appears to be gold leaf.

The restaurant where we ate lunch looked like a garden, with various dining halls and tea houses and pagodas situated around a lake fringed with bamboo and willows and banyan trees, and dahlias and chrysanthemums. Since Canton, also called the "City of Flowers," is just within the tropical zone, it has spring-like

weather. Flowers, they say, blossom year-round.

For the first time I sampled my favorite of foods, Cantonese Chinese, in the place where it originated: sweet and sour pork, bean sprouts, fried rice, egg drop soup, water chestnuts, sweet and sour shrimp, dumplings stuffed with something like egg custard. . . . I didn't know where or when to stop. The only problem was having to eat with chopsticks — red ones in this restaurant. My fingers kept getting mixed up. Charles Gebelein, one of our tour group, asked why I didn't take the plastic fork from the dish of fresh pineapple and keep it to use, so I wouldn't starve! I followed his suggestion.

Winston Crawley pointed out in *Partners Across the Pacific* that the People's Republic of China accounts for 22 percent of the human race. Five or six million of them live in the greater Canton area. As our guide, Hong, said, "Everybody works." In all the hurrying throngs of people and bicycles, I saw no one stop to rest or to loaf. Everybody apparently had a job to do and was bent on doing it.

Women were sweeping the street with brush brooms like Mama swept our yards with long ago. One elderly woman with a whistle in her mouth was trying to settle a traffic squabble. (Hong said retired persons are given

jobs like this woman who was assigned to a three-block area to be an intermediary in traffic disputes.) Women with masks over their noses were emptying garbage cans into large carts.

Men were busy too in the shops and at the markets, chopping up chickens, selling frogs and eels, delivering pigs to the market in trucks, repairing bicycles. . . .

Nearby Foshan, a city 1,300 years old, is known for its handicrafts. Its silk mill reminded me of the cotton mill where I worked when I was 16, except not so much flying lint. In the jade carving factory, dozens of men and women and young people were holding pieces of jade, carving intricate patterns with a small electrically turned wheel, as water flowed over the jade. They were making miniature animals, vases, urns, and other decorative objects. The light was poor; their eyes looked tired. Their work was exquisite.

In one shop, women were using knives to cut designs in paper. Children sat studying at desks near their working mothers. In the courtyard of the shop, two men were making a paper dragon, getting ready to welcome the Chinese New Year which would fall on February 17 and usher in the Year of the Dragon.

(Continued next week)

Mildred Tolar retires



Mildred Tolar

13 years in state government jobs, first with the Forestry Commission and then with the Aeronautics Commission

Her father, Ollie H. Tolar, died in 1955, and then in 1960 her mother, Flora Loftin Tolar, moved to Jackson to live with Mildred. Now Mrs. Tolar is 91 and the two of them continue to live at 514 Avalon Road.

The other day I ate lunch with them. After our blueberry cobbler a la mode she told me how it was that she happened to begin work with the Conven-

tion Board in the first place.

For a good while she had felt there was something special the Lord was calling her to do. She prayed, "If you want me to be in the field of religious work, I'll be willing to do it. Just show me where." One day she lunched with Mary Lib Clayburn, who told her that Dr. Odle would be needing a secretary in a short time. Consequently, she talked with Dr. Odle several times and then went for an interview.

Willing to take a cut in salary if this were the job the Lord wanted her to have, she worked out a budget and wrote down the figure she would need to make in order to pay living expenses. That was the exact amount Dr. Odle offered, so she never doubted this was what God wanted her to do.

"I remember pausing on the steps before I entered the Building and praying the words of the song, 'Have Thine Own Way, Lord.' After I accepted the position, peace came to me because I was confident I was doing what God wanted. I have never regretted my decision."

Mildred has been a member of First Baptist Church, Jackson, ever since she moved here. She worked with youth groups in Church Training for 16 years and taught children in Sunday School several years. Now she is a member of the Blanche Huddins Baptist Women Circle in WMJU and a



Walker

The first verse of scripture most of us memorized was John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The writer of I John contributes a beautiful thought, "See what quality of love the Father has given us, that we should be named and called and counted the children of God! . . ." (I John 3:1 Amplified).

Perry Sanders told those attending the State Evangelism Conference of hearing Manuel Scott preach on the subject, "God is love." Scott began by saying "God! that's too big for me." Then he said, "Love! that's too big for me." Then he said, "Is, I think I can handle that." Truly, the love of God is a subject that stretches the mind, and defies our description. Yet, it warms our hearts and changes our lives.

In Jude 20-23, we are told to keep ourselves in God's love. Can you think of a more secure, caring, worthy, or lasting place to have for your eternal address? This scripture tells us how to live in order to celebrate the love of God.

(1) "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith" (verse 20) — set out to become spiritually mature. We are to grow and not remain in spiritual immaturity. It may be a slow process, but it is continuous and progressive. A chief means for this building is by reading and meditating upon the Word of God.

(2) "Praying in the Holy Ghost" (verse 20) — maintain constant contact with the Throne. If we are to live in the sunshine of God's love, we must have a prayer life which is the burden of desire and wrought by the Holy Spirit. Francis Dixon offers this translation of James 5:16, "The Spirit in-wrought prayer of a man made righteous availeth much."

(2) "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 21) — live in anticipation of the Lord's return. Do you live in this anticipation? If we live in the expectation of his return, it certainly will have a profound effect upon the way we live and serve him.

(4) "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear pulling them out of the fire" (verses 22-23) — rescue the perishing. Believers living in the sunshine of God's love will desire to see others move from the shadows of darkness.

(5) "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (verse 23) — cultivate a hatred of that which is sinful, impure, and doubtful.

So to enjoy and celebrate the love of God, we must walk in the light of his presence and of his Word.

John L. Walker is pastor, First, Lucedale.

Video workshops are scheduled



Harris

Wright

Ron Harris, minister of media, Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, will lead a workshop on editing, special effects and basic television production in the 1988 area video production workshops.

The workshops are scheduled for March 1, at First Church, Gulfport, 7-9 p.m.; March 3, at Parkway Church, Jackson, 7-9 p.m.; and March 4, 7-9 p.m. March 5, 8:30-11:30 a.m. at First Church, Cleveland.

Harris is also an adjunct professor of communications at Southwestern Seminary.

Another workshop feature will be on Local Programming Ideas, led by Mike Wright, vice president, affiliate relations, ACTS Satellite Network, Inc. Wright will show examples of programming and spots being done by

(Continued on page 9)



Pictured above is Jim Hoffman, operations manager of Sears, Meridian, as he presents to James C. Read, dean, an aid to education grant of \$500 for Clarke College. This gift was a portion of \$13,100 given to colleges in Mississippi.

Colleges get Sears grant

Unrestricted grants totaling more than \$13,100 are being distributed to 10 privately supported colleges and universities in Mississippi by Sears-Roebuck Foundation, James Byers, manager of the New Albany area stores, reports.

Blue Mountain College has received a grant in the amount of \$500.00. William Carey College will receive

grants totaling \$1,500. Clarke College has received \$500.

These Mississippi colleges are among 934 private accredited two and four year institutions across the country which are sharing in \$1,750,000 in Sears Foundation funds for the 1987-88 academic year. Funds may be used as the colleges and universities deem necessary.

Staff Changes

Steve Huber has accepted the interim pastorate of Gore Springs Church, Gore Springs (Grenada County). Huber has a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary and at present is working toward his doctorate degree. He has served as pastor at Plank Road Church, Slaughter, La. and Shivers Church, Shivers. He and his wife, Ann, and two sons reside in Grenada.

Kim Parker, student at Ole Miss is minister of music.

Tom Nettles has been called as interim pastor of Briarwood Drive Church, Jackson. Nettles is head of the Department of History and associate professor of Church History at Mid-America Seminary.

Nettles grew up in Brandon. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife, Margaret, have three children, Joe, Robert, and Sara.

Sammy J. McDonald III has been called to Carmel Church, Monticello, as pastor. He goes to Carmel Church from the pastorate of Old Pearl Valley Church, Philadelphia. McDonald is a graduate of Hinds Junior College, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. He has served churches in Rankin, Simpson, and Neshoba counties.

McDonald and his wife, the former Patricia Grantham, are expecting their first child in April. Their new address is Carmel Baptist Church, Rt. 1, Box 67, Monticello, MS 39654, and phone number is 587-7145.

Revival Dates

Colonial Hills, Southaven: Feb. 21-24; Junior Hill, evangelist; John Joiner, music; Tommy Vinson, pastor; 7 nightly.

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Names in the News

Evangelist Carroll Roberson, has just finished recording his second gospel album, on the Harvest label in Nashville. The title of the album is "LOVE FOUND A PARDON FOR ME." The first single will be song that Roberson wrote entitled "WHO." The album offers songs that range from Southern Gospel to a touch of traditional style, and a taste of contemporary.

Roberson's first album included singles like "THIS OLE HOUSE," and "I DON'T KNOW WHY." Roberson served as pastor at Peoples church, Tippah County, for two-and-a-half years, before entering into full-time



Roberson

Clawson and Courtney are coming to Mississippi College

Two innovative Christian artists — Cynthia Clawson and Ragan Courtney — will appear at Mississippi College Feb. 29-March 2 as the featured speakers for Spiritual Enrichment Week.

The theme for the event is "The Two Become One." Courtney and Clawson — a husband and wife team — will share through drama and music how they blend their abilities and work together within their marriage.

Cynthia Clawson is a Christian vocalist and has received a Grammy in addition to three Dove Awards from the Gospel Music Association. Her most recent album is entitled "Im-

mortal" and is released through DaySpring Records.

Ragan Courtney is a teacher, actor, and writer. He and composer Buryl Red are so-creators of several noted works including the praise concert "Beginnings" and the popular musical drama "Celebrate Life." He is currently a member of the faculty at Southern Seminary, teaching drama.

Scheduled appearances are at 10 a.m., Feb. 29 and March 2 in Swor Auditorium, and at 6 p.m., Feb. 29 and March 1. They will appear at a BSU gathering and in several classes. BSU sponsors the event.

Just for the Record



Six couples of Morgan City Church, Leflore Association, renewed their marriage vows in the morning worship service, Sunday, Jan. 10. These couples are taking part in an 11 weeks ministry of marriage enrichment being led by James "Bubba" Walters, pastor. From left, the couples are Gary and Connie Makamson, Wayne and Carolyn Nichols, David and Anita Hodges, James and Gail Walters, Buddy and Annette Morgan, and Earl and Diane Coleman.

Spiritual Emphasis Week is in progress Feb. 16-18 on the Clarke College campus. Services are being held each day at 11 a.m. in the Fine Arts Building auditorium.

Paul Jones, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, is guest speaker.

Harry M. Piland will be the guest speaker for the Jackson County Association "I love Sunday School Rally," which



Piland Sunday School Board.

will conclude the Gulf Coast Sunday School Revival. The rally is scheduled for Feb. 25, at 7 p.m. at First Church, Ocean Springs.

Piland is director of the Sunday School Division of the Southern Baptist



Officers of the newly organized local chapter of the Baptist Nurse Fellowship met recently to make plans for the next meeting scheduled for Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. in the BSU building at Southwest Miss. Junior College. This chapter is seeking to contact RN's, LPN's, and students in McComb, Brookhaven, and Tylertown areas. Kay Carrier and Rebecca Bennett of Brookhaven will be presenting the program on their volunteer mission trip to Honduras. For information call Becky Wilson, 276-3861.

Seated, left, are Barbara Walter, vice president and Becky Wilson, membership. Standing from left, Katherine Prentiss, president and Rebecca Brumfield, programs. Not pictured are Patricia Brown, heritage, Frances Lindsey, secretary/treasurer and Carla Stringer, projects.

Illinois-Baptist elect Swinford

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP) — Maurice Swinford, 59, has been named the seventh executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association.

Swinford, who has been Illinois church development director for nearly 10 years, was elected unanimously Feb. 8 during a special called meeting of the Illinois association's board of directors.

The new leader succeeds Ernest E. Mosley, who resigned March 31, 1987, to become executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

The new executive director is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, his hometown, and Southern Seminary.

He has been pastor of seven churches in 31 years, the last one First Baptist Church of Herrin from 1968 to 1978.

Swinford was a member of the SBC Christian Life Commission for six years.

He and his wife, Charlotte, are the parents of three adult daughters.



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"Woo Woo," Whistlestops are coming

The "Church Growth Train" will make four Whistlestops in North Mississippi Feb. 29-March 3.

These meetings will acquaint church staff and Sunday School leaders with growth-oriented ministries and projects.

The Whistlestops will take place Feb. 29 at Colonial Hills Church, Southaven, 7-9:30 p.m. March 1, First Church, Corinth, 7-9:30 p.m. March 2, First Church, Tupelo, 9:30 a.m. to noon; and March 3, First Church, Starkville, 7-9:30 p.m.

Some of the topics for discussion include how to begin homebound ministries, adult classes, Outreach Bible Study, cradle roll, the Growth Spiral, Youth Plus, Sunday School revivals, and ChildReach.

These Whistlestops are sponsored by the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Carey names Alice McCardle PR director

At William Carey College Alice W. McCardle is the new director of public relations and alumni affairs.



A native of Columbia, McCardle holds degrees from Blue Mountain College and the University of Southern Mississippi. She has been press secretary to former First Lady of Mississippi, Carroll Waller, and was staff writer for the Clarion Ledger/Jackson Daily News. Her most recent position was publications editor for the Department of Alumni Affairs at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Dorris R. Brown is public relations intern at Carey.

Brown is a graduate of USM where she is working on a master's degree in communication.

Beaty to lead conferences for VBS directors

Willie Beaty, a consultant in the small Sunday School administration and projects section at Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, will lead a conference for associational VBS directors with under two years of experience during the 1988 VBS clinics. The clinics will be held:



Beaty March 21, Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; March 22, First Church, Greenwood; March 23, First Church, Brandon; March 24, First Church, McComb; March 25, Temple Church, Hattiesburg.



Bibb retires as pastor of O'Tuckalofa

Marvin Bibb has been pastor of O'Tuckalofa Church, Water Valley, since September, 1984, and is director of missions for Yalobusha Association. He is retiring O'Tuckalofa Church, but will continue to serve as director of missions.

On December 27, the church presented Bibb and his wife, Polly, a "money tree" (pictured) in love and appreciation for their years of service.

The Baptist Women of O'Tuckalofa Church presented at their December meeting a centennial quilt (pictured) to Mrs. Bibb for her leadership and guidance in the organization.

Instrumental Festival is set for state at MC Mar. 4, 5

The Mississippi Baptist Instrumental Festival is set for March 4 and 5, in Nelson Hall on the Mississippi College campus. The schedule begins with auditions 6:30 p.m. on Friday, March 4 and concludes at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 5.

Featured as guest clinician will be Edd Brashier of First Church, Car-

thage. John Henbery, instrumental specialist with the Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, is coordinating the festival.

If registration information is needed contact the Church Music Department for details.

Weekday ed clinic to feature preschoolers

A Church Weekday Education Clinic in March will feature special sessions on dealing with infants, creepers, and toddlers, directors, Mothers' Morning Out, group time, Dramatic play, art, and learning centers.

The clinic will take place Mar. 5 at Colonial Heights Church, Jackson and will "provide participants... with practical workable ideas, techniques, and resources in church weekday early education," according to program materials.

Other clinic topics include Creating a unit for the gifted preschooler and Make it and take it.

For registration information, contact Shirley Oglesby, MBCB, 968-3800.

Morrison Heights will host youth four-part music festival

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will host the State Youth Four-Part Music Festival, February 20, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mississippi youth will be in the spotlight as they participate in the vocal, instrumental, conducting, and keyboard areas of the festival.

Contact the Church Music Department at (601) 968-3800 for registration information.

Biblical interpretation

(Continued from page 5)
perspectives on the subject.

Joining Packer as major speakers will be Robert Johnston, dean, North Park College and Theological Seminary, Chicago; Walter Kaiser, dean and professor of Old Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.; and Grant Osborne, professor of New Testament, also at Trinity.

In the conference's final session, all four speakers will participate in a panel discussion moderated by John Newport, vice president for academic affairs at Southwestern Seminary.

Roy L. Honeycutt, president of Southern Seminary here, and conference program chairman, said the purpose of the meeting is "to build on the foundation laid last year on the nature of Scripture with discussions about why and how Scripture should be interpreted."

While the format bears similarities to last year's meeting, Honeycutt said, the subject nature called for some modifications. Speakers have been asked to give "lecture/demonstrations," dealing with interpretations of specific biblical texts, he said.

Four of the presentations will be followed by 90-minute workshops where participants will meet in small groups to discuss the interpretation of biblical passages. The workshops, Honeycutt said, will be "in-depth working sessions" that will deal with some of the same themes and texts addressed by the plenary speakers.

Brandon women will celebrate WMU centennial

The Baptist Women of the W.M.U. of Brandon, First Church are inviting members of Baptist Women organizations from other Baptist churches of Rankin County to join in their "Centennial Celebration" to be led by Wilda Fancher, State W.M.U. president, on Sunday, Feb. 28, from 4 to 6 p.m. This meeting will be held in the Banquet Hall of Brandon, First Church.

For other information, call the Rankin County WMU Centennial Chairman: Mary Frances Kennedy, 551 Shiloh Road, Brandon, MS 39042-8973, (Phone: 825-5358).

"You are urged to bring your centennial quilt to put on display," said the chairman.

Video workshops

(Continued from page 7)

churches across the Southern Baptist Convention. Workshop attendees are invited to bring examples of their program ideas (on 3/4-inch videotape) and share them.

This training is for pastors, ministers of media, other church staff, directors of missions, television committees, local ACTS Board members, church television crews and other interested persons.

The meeting is sponsored by the MBCB's Department of Broadcast Services.

Professors from the six SBC seminaries again will lead these discussion groups.

The conference also will include a series of worship services featuring the preaching of five Southern Baptist pastors: Ken Hemphill, First Church, Norfolk, Va.; Richard Jackson, North Phoenix Church, Ariz.; Jon Stubblefield, recently called to First Church, Shreveport, from Walnut Street Church, Louisville, Ky.; Daniel Vestal, First Church, Midland, Texas; and Jerry Vines, First Church, Jacksonville.

Music at the worship services will be led by Phillip Landgrave, professor of church music at Southern.

Conference rates per person are \$154/single, \$114.25/double, \$106/triple and \$101.95/four. Cost includes three night's lodging, all meals and conference fees.

A deposit of \$38.50 should be sent to Conference on Biblical Interpretation, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Box 128, Ridgecrest, NC 28770.

David Wilkinson writes for Southern Seminary.

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Matthew 18 focuses on instructions to the church

By Jimmy G. McGee
Matthew 18:10-22

The greatest need in the church today is reconciliation that honors repentance and forgiveness. The same is true of Christian families and among Christians generally.



McGee

Chapter 18 of Matthew focuses on right relationships within the kingdom of heaven. It is appropriate to interpret this entire chapter with reference to the church, the body of Christ, the community of believers.

In verses 1-5, the example of greatness among kingdom citizens is a little child of faith and humility.

In verses 6-9, there is a warning about influencing a little child to sin and about causing offenses among brethren. Indeed, sin is so deadly serious in the Christian's life as to demand drastic measures to remove the cause. Jesus insists that it is better to keep one eye than two, if because of two eyes, you sin and burn.

In verses 10-14, consideration, respect, and concern for one another is of utmost importance. Beware about despising "one of these little ones." The Heavenly Father watches over them. "These little ones" are either younger

UNIFORM

Christians or immature ones in the faith. Jesus came to save the lost, and he is concerned that the newly found are safe.

In this context, the parable of the lost sheep pictures 99 as safe in the fold of fellowship and one as having gone astray. For the moment this one becomes more important and claims the attention of the church more than the 99 safe.

Christians need each other and are to look out for one another so as to encourage full growth in Christ. Each is important. It is not the will of God that any one be allowed to perish.

In verses 15-22, Jesus gives practical instructions for dealing with a brother who sins against you. Earlier in verse 7, he acknowledged that offenses will occur. We are to restore one another. When people live at close proximity, stepping on toes, getting in the way, and elbowing is to be expected. An elbow in the ribs may be intentional or accidental. The pain is the same. Offenses among people may come by carelessness, indifference, maliciousness, or imagination. They hurt.

Among Christians as within families, estrangement brought on by sin cannot be ignored. The estrangement will not go away; but

estranged people will go away. God's desire for us and command to us (Matthew 5:24) is to seek reconciliation and restoration.

People are important. Care must be taken in mending brokenness, not to abuse. With love, honesty, and faith in God's word, there are four steps (if all are necessary) in reconciliation.

First, start with a private encounter. Tell your brother between you and him alone what has happened. Talk through with humility and in a spirit of forgiveness. If he hears you, you can rejoice in oneness again.

Second, take one or more respected Christians with you to confront the brother in love. Herein is the value of a reliable witness both to confirm and to counsel. Remember that the purpose of such a visit is not accusation or justification of the old actions but to send away the offending spirit of estrangement. The initiator of reconciliation leads the way in forgiveness, not vindication.

Third, if necessary, share the burden with the church in the continued hope of restoring the fellowship of the estranged. The church has much at stake when only a few members are at odds.

Finally, if any professing Christian refuses reconciliation genuinely offered, then that member will no longer be considered a brother. He is an unbeliever who refuses the grace of

God. While the language seems harsh, the purpose of our Lord is not to discard nor condemn, but to save. Christians are to pray earnestly for the salvation of this unrepentant member.

The church (verse 18) is to confirm (bind and loose) on earth the reality of church fellowship, even as it is in heaven. We dare not treat lightly and carelessly the integrity of spiritual life and church membership. The promises of verses 19 and 20 are usually quoted out of context, verse 19 as a promise of prayer and verse 20 as a promise of divine presence. They are such promises. However, in this context, the praying has to do with mending the broken relationship, and the presence of Jesus has to do with sealing the restored brothers. Both promises assure that people who want to do right by each other will have God's blessing and help.

How often should a Christian be expected to forgive his brother? Seven times is a lot for 20th century Christians. But Jesus insists "seventy times seven!" There is no limit.

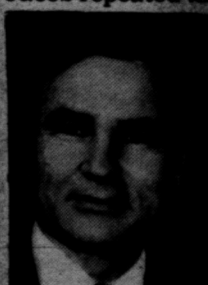
Bruce Larson was right when he said, "When the church has the aroma of forgiveness, the people will come." Anybody can tear something apart. The church is in the business of forgiveness and restoration of lives. Christians are to maintain loving relationships with fellow believers.

Jimmy McGee is pastor, First, Grenada.

Joseph's pride results in his brothers' revenge

By Gayle Alexander
Genesis 37:1 to 38:30

Jacob grew up in a family of partiality. His mother loved him and his father loved Esau. Jacob repeated the same sin. Jacob's partiality



Alexander

was in the direction of favoritism toward Joseph. There may be several reasons for this favoritism. He was a child from old age. He was Rachel's son. Joseph needed closer attention because of the loss of his mother. But most importantly, Joseph bore a much closer kinship with him in spiritual maturity.

This partiality was exemplified in the special "coat of many colors" (37:3) that Jacob had given to Joseph. The coat was basically a tunic that hung to the ankles and had long sleeves. Normally coats came only to the knees and were sleeveless. It resembled the ceremonial robes of the day, or, was one like an overseer would wear. Was Jacob given indication that Joseph was to be an overseer over the rest of the family? Perhaps so!

The brothers felt ill will toward Joseph because of the coat. "When the brothers saw

that their father loved him more, they hated him" (37:4). That hatred was fed from many other sources. Joseph previously had brought an evil report of Jacob concerning his brothers' immorality (37:2). Also, there was a background of family rivalry between the different wives, concubines, and their children. Furthermore, favoritism toward Jacob was tantamount to rejection toward the rest.

Moreover, Joseph was a dreamer and had the audacity to share his dreams. Those dreams indicated something of his ambition and life goals. When he shared those dreams "they hated him all the more" (37:5). Pride is always divisive. Joseph told his dreams with great enthusiasm and pride indicated by his use of "behold" three times (37:7, 9). The first dream about his sheaf standing upright and their sheaves bowing down to him was unmistakable. They identified the interpretation with specificity. "Do you intend to reign over us?" (37:8).

The second dream about the sun, the moon and the 11 stars bowing down to him carried basically the same message. Envy and jealousy gave way to malice and deeper hatred. The writer would have us understand that Joseph

received those dreams as revelations of God, and evidently, the dreams were the chief source of spiritual strength of Joseph in all that was to follow. Joseph had the assurance of ultimate success and that assurance was a refuge for him when he suffered.

"Go... see whether it be well with our brethren... and he came to Shechem" (37:14). Hebron, where Jacob was living, was south of Jerusalem and Shechem was north of Jerusalem. Joseph had a journey of about 50 miles. The field Jacob had bought (33:19) was probably where the sons were grazing the herds.

Joseph was not able to find his brothers at Shechem but inquiries indicated they were at Dothan. Dothan was about 12 miles away. Joseph arrived at Dothan. The plot deepened quickly. Joseph was reveling in pride, or, was grossly immature and insensitive, because he wore the special coat. Pride will always make a person act foolishly. Past guilt caused the brothers to feel that Joseph had come to spy on them again. Their opportunity for revenge had arrived. They seized him and stripped him of his robe. The robe was the immediate object of anger because of its symbolism. But they wanted to get rid of him.

Joseph probably would have been killed then and there, but for the objection of Reuben. They put him in a well which "had no water in it" (37:24). Those pits, or wells, were dug for the purpose of catching water. Joseph was confined until his brothers could decide what they were going to do with him. We are not told why Reuben was absent when the Midianites came through on their way to Egypt. Judah proposed the idea they sell Joseph to them. Judah probably saved Joseph's life by the transaction. When Reuben returned, Joseph was gone.

The deception of their father is told in 37:33-36. Ironically, the coat of favoritism was the vehicle of deception. They dipped the coat in blood and allowed their father to draw his own conclusions as to what had happened to Joseph. Joseph had been sold and carried off to Egypt.

This section closes with a story of immorality about Judah and Tamar in 38:1-30. Such a story shocks us. However, a marvelous story of his pleading for Benjamin is told in chapter 44 to indicate Judah was a changed man. Judah was in the lineage of Jesus and the change in him makes the story of his immorality worthwhile.

Gayle Alexander is pastor, First, Tupelo.

BIBLE BOOK

that their father loved him more, they hated him" (37:4). That hatred was fed from many other sources. Joseph previously had brought an evil report of Jacob concerning his brothers' immorality (37:2). Also, there was a background of family rivalry between the different wives, concubines, and their children. Furthermore, favoritism toward Jacob was tantamount to rejection toward the rest.

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LIFE AND WORK

prior to or during the crime."

On the heels of this bad news we are led to ask, "Where is the hope?" First, let's be clear about the gift of sex. God, in his infinite wisdom and unlimited love, created sex. He is the architect and engineer of sex. Everything he makes is exceedingly good and his design for sex is perfect.

But it is also a powerful gift that requires boundaries. God's boundaries include one man and one woman in the context of marriage. The seventh commandment says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14). The seventh commandment was a stinking law because all of Israel's neighbors were quite promiscuous. Infidelity and immorality were common practices. But God wanted his people to be pure and holy. He wanted a husband and wife to share the gift of each other in the context of commitment. Sex without commitment is like a bank note without a signature — no accountability.

The application of the seventh commandment primarily falls upon a married man having sexual intercourse with a married woman, but it secondarily applies to much more. Our Lord applied it to the intentions of our minds (Matt 5:27-28).

Calvin Miller says in his book "The Valiant Papers," "If the mind is straight, the man will be. Everyone is the mirror of his thoughts." The battle of purity is lost in the mind before the body falls victim to the attack. Similarly, the Apostle Paul warned us to exercise "control" and to "abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thess 4:1-8). Paul's exhortation is directed to singles as much as to marrieds.

In addition to understanding sex as God's gift requiring holy boundaries, we must realize God's forgiveness for those who have failed. No one, however chosen, blessed, and used of God, is immune to sexual failure. Anyone, regardless of how many victories he or she has won, can still fall. The failure is sin, but it is not unforgivable.

Jesus forgave a woman at Sychar (Jn 4), a

lady in the temple (Jn 8), and a weeping damsel whose tears drenched his feet (Lk 7). Truly an "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Consequently, Paul offers a prescription against sexual failure in his challenge to the Corinthians. In the context of marriage, a husband and a wife should give careful attention to the sexual needs of one another.

The advice in 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 is quite practical and clear: strive to satisfy each other's needs and do not deny one another except during a season of prayer. Meeting mutual needs closes the door to extramarital affairs.

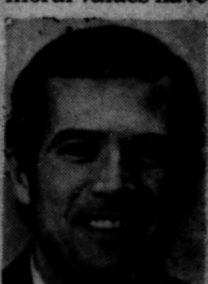
It is difficult to determine if we are experiencing the aftershock of the sexual revolution or if the tremors are still continuing. For certain, we are not so naive to think that we can take a casual approach to the subtle influences that distort God's gift of sexuality. Positive biblical alternatives can counter the distortion, but the battle of purity versus perversion is a fight that affords neutrality to no one.

Dean Register is pastor, First, Gulfport.

Seventh commandment: Beauty of sexual purity

By M. Dean Register

Few would doubt that we have experienced a sexual revolution in America. Traditional moral values have been shoved aside by the bul-



Register

ly of indecency. Comments that were once considered objectionable are now advertised on windows and bumpers of automobiles. The pornography industry has fed upon the lust of adults and youth and maneuvered itself into a multi-million dollar filth frenzy.

James Dobson, family therapist and committee member on the "Attorney General's Report on Pornography" indicated that the proliferation of smut has reached such a despicable point that children are now the targets of exploitation.

A study in the state of Michigan from 1956-1979 revealed that 41 percent of 38,000 sexual assault cases involved the use of porn "just

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Honor Roll of Churches

Each January, we review and analyze cash gifts received in Village offices during the preceding calendar year. One of the more interesting and gratifying facets of this analysis is a listing of Mississippi Baptist Churches in the order of their designated cash gifts to our ministry — "the Honor Roll of Churches." In 1987, local Baptist churches contributing designated operating gifts, in any amount, to our ministry, aggregated 1587. According to Convention Board offices, there are 1953 different cooperating churches in the state. Of these, 202 made operating gifts \$1,000.00 or more to the BCV which were received in our offices during 1987 by December 31. According to our records, these "top 202" churches are:

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Dec. 9, 1987

January 6, 1988

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Mr. & Mrs. Tom Rice
Mrs. Mary Bell Tadlock
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Denson
Gary Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Donald E. Taylor
Mr. John V. Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Charles V. Thomas
Mrs. Anabel Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Herman Boroughs
Mrs. O'Neal Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Garland R. Parish
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Mr. E. C. Traylor
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Mrs. Gertrude Walsh
Forest Baptist Church
Henry (Heno) Walters
Mrs. Roberta Graves
Lisa Lantrip Warren
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Goudelock
Mr. Horace Warren
Mrs. Horace D. Warren
Dr. Edwin Alexander Watson, Jr.
Hamp & Lucille Reid

RANK CHURCH NAME

CHURCH CITY

1987

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|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| 1. | First Baptist Church | Water Valley | 40002.29 |
| 2. | Forest Baptist Church | Forest | 24798.00 |
| 3. | First Baptist Church | Booneville | 18024.00 |
| 4. | First Baptist Church, Jackson | Jackson | 17443.76 |
| 5. | Rolling Creek Baptist Church | Quitman | 9364.25 |
| 6. | Morrison Heights Baptist Church | Clinton | 8338.03 |
| 7. | Hillcrest Baptist Church | Jackson | 8024.10 |
| 8. | Woodland Hills Baptist Church | Jackson | 7719.70 |
| 9. | First Baptist Church | Vicksburg | 7586.43 |
| 10. | First Baptist Church | Greenville | 6676.00 |
| 11. | First Baptist Church | Amory | 6332.00 |
| 12. | First Baptist Church | Osley | 6252.00 |
| 13. | Raymond Baptist Church | Raymond | 6025.00 |
| 14. | First Baptist Church | Amola | 5939.00 |
| 15. | First Baptist Church | Ardenada | 5158.22 |
| 16. | First Baptist Church | Louisville | 5127.00 |
| 17. | Ingomar Baptist Church | New Albany | 4926.00 |
| 18. | Meadville Baptist Church | Meadville | 4856.91 |
| 19. | First Baptist Church | Crystal Springs | 4839.00 |
| 20. | First Baptist Church | Hazlehurst | 4687.00 |
| 21. | Briar Hill Baptist Church | Florence | 4587.00 |
| 22. | Mount Zion Baptist Church-Tate | Independence | 4310.00 |
| 23. | Harrisburg Baptist Church | Tupelo | 4267.00 |
| 24. | Tylertown Baptist Church | Tylertown | 4250.83 |
| 25. | First Baptist Church | Florence | 4245.00 |
| 26. | First Baptist Church | Brandon | 4231.55 |
| 27. | Broadmoor Baptist Church | Jackson | 4029.50 |
| 28. | First Baptist Church | McComb | 4025.52 |
| 29. | Van Winkle Baptist Church | Jackson | 4009.00 |
| 30. | First Baptist Church | Clinton | 3819.00 |
| 31. | Tate Street Baptist Church | Corinth | 3784.00 |
| 32. | First Baptist Church | Winona | 3643.00 |
| 33. | Mount Moriah Baptist Church | Bogue Chitto | 3642.00 |
| 34. | Liberty Baptist Church | Liberty | 3599.84 |
| 35. | First Baptist Church | Laurel | 3568.71 |
| 36. | First Baptist Church | Columbus | 3531.00 |
| 37. | Hollandale Baptist Church | Hollandale | 3453.00 |
| 38. | First Baptist Church | Bruce | 3445.00 |
| 39. | First Baptist Church | Gulfport | 3362.46 |
| 40. | Sylvarena Baptist Church | Raleigh | 3341.00 |
| 41. | Parkway Baptist Church | Jackson | 3340.00 |
| 42. | First Baptist Church | Picayune | 3301.55 |
| 43. | First Baptist Church | Itta Bena | 3223.93 |
| 44. | First Baptist Church | Greenwood | 3218.61 |
| 45. | Temple Baptist Church | Hattiesburg | 3163.00 |
| 46. | First Baptist Church | Union | 3154.00 |
| 47. | Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church | Meridian | 3066.75 |
| 48. | Leaf Baptist Church | Leaf | 3060.68 |
| 49. | First Baptist Church | Batesville | 3030.00 |
| 50. | First Baptist Church | New Augusta | 2973.00 |
| 51. | Centreville Baptist Church | Centreville | 2935.00 |
| 52. | Calvary Baptist Church | Jackson | 2852.00 |
| 53. | First Baptist Church | Aberdeen | 2813.19 |
| 54. | Northwest Baptist Association | Hernando | 2750.00 |
| 55. | State Boulevard Baptist Church | Meridian | 2725.04 |
| 56. | First Baptist Church | Quitman | 2699.80 |
| 57. | Grays Creek Baptist Church | Hernando | 2698.00 |
| 58. | First Baptist Church | Eupora | 2674.10 |
| 59. | DeKalb Baptist Church | DeKalb | 2630.10 |
| 60. | First Baptist Church | West Point | 2584.00 |
| 61. | Calvary Baptist Church | Tupelo | 2552.65 |
| 62. | Roseland Park Baptist Church | Picayune | 2520.00 |
| 63. | Colonial Heights Baptist Church | Jackson | 2508.50 |
| 64. | Midway Baptist Church | Meridian | 2500.00 |
| 65. | First Baptist Church | Meridian | 2485.55 |
| 66. | Bethel Baptist Church | Poplarville | 2485.00 |
| 67. | Rienzi Baptist Church | Rienzi | 2462.26 |
| 68. | First Baptist Church | Anguilla | 2440.00 |
| 69. | Northminster Baptist Church | Jackson | 2435.00 |
| 70. | Williamsville Baptist Church | Kosciusko | 2426.12 |
| 71. | First Baptist Church | Magee | 2400.00 |
| 72. | New Prospect Baptist Church | Brookhaven | 2335.00 |
| 73. | Union Seminary Baptist Church | Laurel | 2329.83 |
| 74. | Society Hill Baptist Church | Oak Vale | 2319.34 |
| 75. | Springfield Baptist Church | Morton | 2229.00 |
| 76. | North Greenwood Baptist Church | Greenwood | 2225.00 |
| 77. | First Baptist Church | Okolona | 2193.00 |
| 78. | Phalti Baptist Church | Prentiss | 2192.45 |
| 79. | Highland Baptist Church | Meridian | 2158.15 |
| 80. | First Baptist Church | Coffeeville | 2152.00 |
| 81. | Enon Baptist Church | Jayess | 2147.00 |
| 82. | Indian Springs Baptist Church | Hattiesburg | 2125.00 |
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| 87. | Ephesus Baptist Church | Forest | 1967.00 |
| 88. | Second Baptist Church | Greenville | 1922.00 |
| 89. | Bunker Hill Baptist Church | Columbia | 1922.00 |
| 90. | Oakhurst Baptist Church | Clarksdale | 1901.00 |
| 91. | First Baptist Church | Marks | 1897.00 |
| 92. | Pearl River Baptist Assoc. | Carriere | 1896.18 |
| 93. | Mount Horeb Baptist Church | Meridian | 1896.00 |
| 94. | Beulah Baptist Church | Magee | 1892.00 |
| 95. | Noxapater Baptist Church | Noxapater | 1887.05 |
| 96. | Alta Woods Baptist Church | Jackson | 1883.00 |
| 97. | East Philadelphia Baptist Church | Philadelphia | 1877.00 |
| 98. | Fellowship Baptist Church | Meridian | 1854.82 |
| 99. | First Baptist Church | Pontotoc | 1846.00 |
| 100. | Navilla Baptist Church | McComb | 1833.00 |
| 101. | North Winona Baptist Church | Winona | 1832.00 |
| 102. | First Baptist Church | Corinth | 1831.34 |
| 103. | Sallis Baptist Church | Sallis | 1800.00 |
| 104. | First Baptist Church | Leland | 1797.09 |
| 105. | Oakdale Baptist Church | Brandon | 1764.50 |
| 106. | Shuqualak Baptist Church | Shuqualak | 1760.00 |
| 107. | Oak Forest Baptist Church | Jackson | 1750.00 |
| 108. | Shiloh Baptist Church | Big Creek | 1731.28 |
| 109. | Main Street Baptist Church | Hattiesburg | 1703.30 |
| 110. | First Baptist Church | Calhoun City | 1671.67 |
| 111. | New Prospect Baptist Church | Oxford | 1668.00 |
| 112. | Parkway Baptist Church | Kosciusko | 1640.22 |
| 113. | Center Baptist Church | Blue Springs | 1635.00 |
| 114. | First Baptist Church | Natchez | 1634.00 |
| 115. | Colonial Hills Baptist Church | Southaven | 1631.00 |
| 116. | Pine Forest Baptist Church | Collinsville | 1626.61 |
| 117. | First Baptist Church | Coldwater | 1585.00 |
| 118. | Carmel Baptist Church | Meridian | 1581.50 |
| 119. | First Baptist Church | Tupelo | 1552.10 |
| 120. | Calvary Baptist Church | Greenwood | 1550.00 |
| 121. | Fairview Baptist Church | Columbus | 1550.00 |
| 122. | Morgantown Baptist Church | Natchez | 1527.30 |
| 123. | Pocahontas Baptist Church | Jackson | 1494.00 |
| 124. | Providence Baptist Church | Cleveland | 1478.00 |
| 125. | First Baptist Church, Sardis | Sardis | 1478.00 |
| 126. | Central Baptist Church | McNeill | 1459.89 |
| 127. | Indian Springs Baptist Church | Laurel | 1443.00 |
| 128. | Grace Memorial Baptist Church | Gulfport | 1428.00 |
| 129. | Bethsaida Baptist Church | French Camp | 1426.26 |
| 130. | Edna Baptist Church | Columbia | 1421.70 |
| 131. | Macedonia Baptist Church | Brookhaven | 1410.00 |
| 132. | Crowder Baptist Church | Crowder | 1409.11 |
| 133. | New Harmony Baptist Church | Blue Springs | 1394.10 |
| 134. | Hurricane Creek Baptist Church | Sandy Hook | 1381.79 |
| 135. | Calvary Baptist Church | Summit | 1372.59 |
| 136. | First Baptist Church | Hattiesburg | 1366.00 |
| 137. | Mount Zion Baptist Church-DeSoto | Hernando | 1350.00 |
| 138. | Kolola Springs Baptist Church | Caledonia | 1343.00 |
| 139. | Friendship Baptist Church | McComb | 1334.00 |
| 140. | Bethlehem Baptist Church | Forkville | 1321.97 |
| 141. | First Baptist Church | Lexington | 1307.20 |
| 142. | First Baptist Church | Cleveland | 1294.91 |
| 143. | Central Baptist Church | McComb | 1294.00 |
| 144. | First Baptist Church | Morton | 1282.66 |
| 145. | North Batesville Baptist Church | Batesville | 1276.01 |
| 146. | First Baptist Church | Brookhaven | 1275.00 |
| 147. | Lexie Baptist Church | Tylertown | 1273.06 |
| 148. | Calvary Baptist Church | West Point | 1249.00 |
| 149. | Washington Baptist Church | Washington | 1247.66 |
| 150. | Paul Truitt Baptist Church | Pearl | 1245.00 |
| 151. | County Line Baptist Church | Crystal Springs | 1228.00 |
| 152. | First Baptist Church | Yazoo City | 1226.00 |
| 153. | Mount Zion Baptist Church | Florence | 1200.00 |
| 154. | Bethany Baptist Church | Meridian | 1200.00 |
| 155. | Oak Grove Baptist Church | Mendenhall | 1200.00 |
| 156. | Crestview Baptist Church | Hattiesburg | 1200.00 |
| 157. | Morgan Chapel Baptist Church | Sturgis | 1184.00 |
| 158. | Gaston Baptist Church | Booneville | 1162.00 |
| 159. | Galilee Baptist Church | Gloster | 1161.00 |
| 160. | First Baptist Church | New Albany | 1155.10 |
| 161. | Beulah Memorial Baptist Church | Bolton | 1153.94 |
| 162. | First Baptist Church | Rolling Fork | 1143.00 |
| 163. | Cedar Bluff Baptist Church | Cedar Bluff | 1141.00 |
| 164. | Belden Baptist Church | Belden | 1140.00 |
| 165. | First Baptist Church | Mendenhall | 1137.00 |
| 166. | Friendship Baptist Church | Sturgis | 1137.00 |
| 167. | Holcomb Baptist Church | Holcomb | 1131.00 |
| 168. | Griffith Memorial Baptist Church | Jackson | 1130.00 |
| 169. | Flora Baptist Church | Flora | 1125.00 |
| 170. | First Baptist Church | Starkville | 1118.75 |
| 171. | First Baptist Church | Newton | 1115.74 |
| 172. | Macedonia Baptist Church | Myrtle | 1102.25 |
| 173. | Daniel Memorial Baptist Church | Jackson | 1100.00 |
| 174. | Easthaven Baptist Church | Brookhaven | 1100.00 |
| 175. | Antioch Baptist Church | Prentiss | 1100.00 |
| 176. | White Oak Baptist Church | Carthage | 1099.00 |
| 177. | First Baptist Church | Pascagoula | 1098.00 |
| 178. | Big Creek Baptist Church | Big Creek | 1085.00 |
| 179. | New Hope Baptist Church | Meridian | 1082.00 |
| 180. | Old Silver Creek Baptist Church | Silver Creek | 1078.00 |
| 181. | Raymond Road Baptist Church | Raymond | 1075.00 |
| 182. | Emmanuel Baptist Church | Greenville | 1071.00 |
| 183. | Ebenezer Baptist Church | Centreville | 1066.19 |
| 184. | Georgetown Baptist Church | Georgetown | 1061.04 |
| 185. | Pachuta Baptist Church | Pachuta | 1055.00 |
| 186. | Walnut Grove Baptist Church | Walnut Grove | 1050.00 |
| 187. | Salem Baptist Church | Raymond | 1050.00 |
| 188. | Pelahatchie Baptist Church | Pelahatchie | 1045.25 |
| 189. | First Baptist Church | Kosciusko | 1037.25 |
| 190. | Gooden Lake Baptist Church | Belzoni | 1030.00 |
| 191. | Gallman Baptist Church | Gallman | 1026.00 |
| 192. | Seminary Baptist Church | Seminary | 1020.16 |
| 193. | Tuscola Baptist Church | Lena | 1020.00 |
| 194. | Calvary Baptist Church | Belmont | 1018.16 |
| 195. | Ackerman Baptist Church | Ackerman | 1014.00 |
| 196. | West Jackson Street Baptist Church | Tupelo | 1010.00 |
| 197. | Kendrick Baptist Church | Corinth | 1005.00 |
| 198. | Meadowview Baptist Church | Starkville | 1001.00 |
| 199. | West Baptist Church | West | 1000.00 |
| 200. | Pearson Baptist Church | Pearl | 1000.00 |
| 201. | Mount Zion Baptist Church | Taylorsville | 1000.00 |
| 202. | West Kemper Baptist Church | DeKalb | 1000.00 |

Baptist Record



Home missionary Dolores Thomas (r) shares breakfast with Betty Scott, postmistress in Camden, Maine. Thomas, who serves as church starter for the Upper New England Baptist

Association, discusses the future possibilities of the Bible study which meets in Scott's home once a week.

Starting churches is Maine effort for Delores Thomas

By Susan Todd

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Home missionary Dolores Thomas never intended to be a church starter. But when she "walked through the back door," it just happened naturally.

Thomas and her husband, Gordon, were appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1962 to begin a mission in Maine. She assisted her husband in his pastoral ministry and directed weekday ministries for children. Through their work, she became a seasoned church starter.

When her husband died suddenly of a heart attack in 1976, Thomas struggled with a crucial life decision. "We had been there for 14 years," she said. "For the next two years, I struggled to determine what the Lord would have me to do. It seemed that my call, also, was to that area."

She continued to work in Christian social ministries programs in Maine until 1984. At that time, the Home Mission Board reappointed her as a church starter.

Today, Thomas leads Bible studies in three Maine towns. She also encourages and equips existing churches as they support mission churches and Bible studies.

The days Thomas leads Bible studies start early. "I try to spend the day working in the area where the

studies are held," she said. "I make contacts and visits during the day." During the evening, she meets with adults to lead them in Bible study, with hopes that each group will become an established church.

Baptists in four Maine towns — Augusta, Farmington, Belfast and Blue Hill — have recently established a church or mission which began as a Bible study.

But it isn't always easy. Thomas faces many hindrances in starting churches in Maine. Growth is slow. Public places in which to meet are not always available. And it often takes a while for community members to trust her. "You have to prove yourself by being there for a while," she said. "There are so many groups meeting, some of them cultish. The trust level is not very high."

Above all obstacles, one looms greater. There aren't enough people to do the work. "We need more trained leadership or persons who would be willing to be trained. If we had more leadership, we would see so much more accomplished."

"Pray that the Lord would send laborers," Thomas said. "I don't necessarily mean for him to send them from without, but to call them from within. One of our great, great

joys is when we see a new work develop and watch the Lord call leaders from within the group."

Besides traveling throughout the state to lead Bible studies, Thomas meets quarterly with the pastors of Maine and their spouses. They gather to coordinate strategies and to plan for the work of Southern Baptists in Maine.

She also directs the work of all summer missions volunteers. "In 1987, we had 263 volunteers — youth mission groups, adult groups, individuals and couples," she said. "I assign them to areas of new church starts. They help us to do surveys and lead Backyard Bible Clubs."

Thomas also chairs a committee which is responsible for building a conference center for the Upper New England Baptist Association. She coordinates construction groups and volunteers in the building project.

A quarterly newsletter also falls under her responsibilities.

Despite her work load, Thomas is excited about starting churches. "The Lord keeps us encouraged by doing something new every week. I don't want to paint a picture of it being easy. It is a struggle, but the Lord keeps us encouraged."

Susan Todd writes for WMU, SBC.

Israel curtails New Testament in schools

Israel, Jerusalem — The Bible Society has expressed concern over Israel's decision not to permit distribution in schools of editions of the Bible which include the New Testament.

According to the "Jerusalem Post,"

a spokesman for the Israeli Minister of Education maintained that the Old and New Testaments ought not to be taught as though they were of equal value. The Old Testament, he stated, came from God, whereas the New Testament was written by humans.

The Bible Society editions had been widely used. In 1986 the Society, which is based in Jerusalem, distributed 11,737 complete Bibles, 5,838 New Testaments and 18,945 scripture portions.

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How can I
make up for
wrongs?

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QUESTION

When I was growing up, I fell in with the wrong crowd and got involved in some really bad things. I fought with my parents and broke their hearts because of my rebellion and wild living. Now all my so-called friends are gone who-knows-where, and I have alienated all my family and church friends. Even God seems so far away. Why has he abandoned me like this? How can I ever make up for all the wrong things I've done?

ANSWER

You have come face to face with the hard truth that actions have consequences. That is one characteristic of youth: it is hard for them to realize that their daily choices — which may seem very unimportant and trivial — may have lifetime consequences.

Can you change the past? No.

You cannot go back and undo the wrong that has been done. But does this mean the future must be ruined as well? Certainly not. God can redeem even the past, if you are willing to confess your sins to him and to those you have wronged. Talk with your parents about your regret for what has happened and about what you can do to atone for your mistakes. Survey your situation to see what alternatives are open to you. Get busy doing something constructive with your life, instead of wasting your energies in punishing yourself for the destructive actions of the past.

Be assured that God has not abandoned you. If he seems far away, it is not he who has moved! He is there beside you, waiting for you to stop trying to manage all these things by yourself instead of trusting him to forgive and redeem. He will not erase the mistakes of the past, but He will help you deal with the consequences.

Editors work for '91 commentary debut

By Jim Lowry

DALLAS (BP) — Consulting editors for a new 40-volume Bible commentary to be published by Broadman Press met in Dallas in mid-January to begin the process of selecting writers and recommending details to move toward a 1991 debut.

The six consulting editors, meeting with General Editor Michael Smith, frequently spoke of the willingness and enthusiasm of Southern Baptist scholars who have been approached regarding their interest in participating in the project.

The commentary project, which began with authorization from Southern Baptist Sunday School Board trustees in February 1987, may include as many as 50 writers and more than 24,000 manuscript pages of biblical and theological translation and interpretation, Smith said.

Consulting Editor L. Russ Bush III, associate professor of philosophy of religion at Southwestern Seminary, said his hopes for the commentary are that it will "provide a useful tool for pastors and Sunday school teachers which would build up the body of Christ by giving more knowledge of Scripture. The time is right for Baptists to produce a commentary with extensive exegesis of Scripture."

Smith said Broadman expects to release about 10 volumes of the commentary each year after the initial release in June of 1991.

The maximum length of a volume will be 400 pages, with the book of Psalms requiring two 300-page volumes. Several volumes will include more than one book of the Bible.

Jim Lowry writes for the Sunday School Board.

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